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as to justify all self-sacrifice ; which shall make us love man by the new consecrations it sheds on his life and destiny ; which shall force through the thin partitions of conventionalism and expediency ; vindicate the majesty of reason ; give new power to the voice of conscience, and new vitality to human affection ; soften and elevate passion ; guide enthusiasm in a right direction ; and speak out in the high language of men to a nation of men.

ART. II. — *Lowell Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity*. By JOHN GORHAM PALFREY. With a *Discourse on the Life and Character of John Lowell, Jr.* By EDWARD EVERETT. Boston: James Munroe and Company. 1843. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 367 and 444.

To the late John Lowell, Jr., we are indebted, not only for the most munificent private endowment for literary or philanthropic purposes ever made in New England, but yet more for the conception of an entirely new institution, occupying at once the highest and the broadest ground,—enlisting in its administration the best and most cultivated minds in the community, and bringing the results of their learning and acumen within the reach of multitudes who could enjoy them in no other way. The Lowell Institute is a free University,—a University for the people,—designed to embrace every department of literary, scientific, and ethical culture, to develope and cherish original thought and laborious research on the widest range of subjects, and then to give to genius or application its best reward, in an enlarged utterance, and in the power of the highest usefulness to the greatest number.

The first series of lectures published in behalf of the Institute ought, of course, to contain Mr. Everett's beautiful biography of its founder. From this we learn, that the bequest, by which he has made his fellow-citizens so largely his debtors, was in entire harmony with his whole life and spirit. He belonged to that class of liberal-minded merchants, whose generous love of arts and letters has left its traces in the foundation of nearly every professorship in our

ancient University, and in nearly every alcove in her library ; while their philanthropy has surrounded their city with noble institutions for the relief of almost every infirmity of body, mind, and heart. Among those who have contributed to raise to so high an intellectual and moral standard the mercantile character of our metropolis, the ancestors and near kindred of Mr. Lowell, both on his father's and his mother's side, deserve, and have received from Mr. Everett, the most respectful and grateful notice. Thus surrounded by examples of talent and wealth consecrated to the public good, even while most deeply engrossed in business, Mr. Lowell neglected no worthy cause which he could aid, and shunned no trust or office, in which he could contribute to the general welfare. With an earnest thirst for knowledge, he combined a no less earnest desire for its diffusion ; and a prominent item of his preparation for the extended plan of travel, in the prosecution of which he died, was the bequest of an ample portion of his property for the support of those courses of lectures which now bear his name. His testamentary directions were completed in a codicil to his will, written amidst the ruins of Thebes. These directions, with Mr. Everett's just and appropriate commentary upon them, we had marked for insertion ; but find that they were quoted in a former number of this Journal, in a notice of Mr. Everett's Lecture,* an edition of which was published soon after its delivery. Referring our readers to that notice for the sketch of Mr. Lowell's life and plan, which we should otherwise have given here, we pass at once to Dr. Palfrey's Lectures.

We have, in these volumes, three courses of eight lectures each, delivered in three successive years, — the first course comprising the “general scheme of the evidences of Christianity,” and the second and third being a compend of the history of infidelity, — a synopsis of Jewish, Pagan, and Deistical objections to Christianity. We have, also, in an Appendix to the first volume, Dr. Palfrey's valuable Dudleyan Lecture on “The Theory and Uses of Natural Religion.”

Dr. Palfrey's style of thought is eminently perspicuous. We never encounter in his writings those shadowy, half-

* Vol. LI. pp 225, *et seq.*

formed, prematurely penned ideas, which in our times stand so often in the place of sound, sober thought. His language is carefully chosen, explicit, and in pure taste. His sentences are all full of meaning, and unencumbered by mere expletives. His only fault of style is a tendency to involved, indirect, circuitous phraseology, — an over-fondness for parenthesis, — a too free use, and too frequent repetition of qualifying words and phrases, — the besetting sin of an accurate mind, which likes not to trust to the reader any one idea, without connecting with it, in the compass of the same sentence, all its needed modifications and abatements. This peculiarity, no doubt, makes Dr. Palfrey a less popular writer with the multitude than he might otherwise be ; but the patient and diligent reader will find that he is making constant progress with his author, and that, when one of these complex sentences is mastered, he has taken a long step forward on solid ground, — has become fully possessed of some one entire and definite idea closely connected with the point under discussion.

The work before us is marked throughout by carefully matured thought, and by explicit and guarded statement. Its reasoning, though close and acute, is never captious or sophistical, — though profound, is always clear. As a compend of the evidences of Christianity, it takes precedence of all previous works in point of comprehensiveness and thoroughness, while in no respect is it inferior to any, except that one may miss in it the winning *naïveté* of Paley's style and manner, — a grace in which he confessedly stands alone and unapproached.

Dr. Palfrey's reasoning is, throughout, severely just and accurate, equally shunning the opposite errors of unauthorized assumption on his own side, and of gratuitous concession to his opponents. This happy medium has rarely been attained. The error of many professed defenders of the faith has been, that they have assumed more than a skeptic is bound to grant, — that they have taken their stand on a higher ground than their opponents, — that they have begged some points in order to prove others. The result has been the production of wholesome homilies, of well-phrased panegyrics on Christianity, highly edifying to a believer, but worse than useless for their professed purpose, inasmuch as they leave upon an indifferent or hostile mind the impression,

that Christianity has not its basis in the common laws of belief, — in those fundamental truths which no one questions. Christians have written as if it were gross sacrilege to uncover the foundations of their faith ; they have been restrained by sincere religious awe from the minute, logical analysis of the elements of their belief ; and their adversaries have mistaken their reverence for a lurking skepticism. But in the work before us, while a tone of deep religious reverence is sustained throughout, it is not suffered to interfere with the full and candid statement of difficulties and objections, — with the exhibition of the entire field of controversy, — with the surrender of all the vantage-ground often claimed on the score of hallowed associations. No appeal is made to the religious biases of education, — none to the odium which so generally attaches to infidelity.

Dr. Palfrey has no less happily shunned an error of the opposite bearing. Many writers on the evidences of Christianity have written as if they doubted the force of their own arguments and the validity of their own answers to objections. Difficulties, which they had seemingly disposed of, they have not suffered to lie still. Phantoms of doubt, which they had once laid, they have summoned up again. Indeed, the process in some works has seemed to be, the evoking of every spirit of unbelief, and the doing battle with all of them to the last, the curtain dropping in the midst of the grand *mêlée*, with the scales of victory equipoised. Dr. Palfrey claims the right of trying each separate issue by itself, — of regarding a point once proved as definitively settled, and an objection once refuted as put out of the combat. For instance, after proving that the Gospels, which we now have, are the undoubted writings of the men whose names they bear, he suffers no floating doubt of the authorship of these records to mingle with the discussion of their trustworthiness, but makes use of their genuineness, already demonstrated, as an available “stand-point” for farther reasoning. In like manner, too, when he has vindicated the Evangelists from the charge of imposture, and has made their honesty an established fact, he takes his position upon that fact in proving that they were well-informed and undeluded witnesses and historians. Now, this is the only true mode of reasoning ; it is acknowledged as legitimate in every other department of inquiry ; nothing that needs proof

could be proved without it. On all other subjects, men refuse to retrace steps once taken, and to yield ground once won ; but they use, as they would axioms, propositions already demonstrated. Why, then, should the Christian apologist deem nothing proved, till he has proved every thing, — no portion of the field his own, till he has conquered the whole of it ? Why should he, unless for the mere show of arms, surrender any vantage-ground lawfully acquired ? Hardly any other subject would bear to be thus treated ; and nothing gives us so high an idea of the overflowing fulness and sufficiency of the Christian evidences, as the fact that they can present a fair front, and carry with them great weight of proof, when thus exhibited in detail and without mutual defence or corroboration.

Another prominent, and, as we believe, a unique excellence of Dr. Palfrey's work, consists in his confining the argument to Christianity considered as distinct from Judaism, instead of blending the two together, and intermingling the trains of reasoning appropriate to each respectively. Now, as to ourselves, we sincerely believe, as does our author, in the divine origin of the Mosaic economy. Nay, more, we plead guilty (notwithstanding the tendency of the times to sneer and cavil at the supernatural) to a belief in all the Scriptures, in ante-Abrahamic and post-Mosaic revelations, in a chain of miracle and prophecy reaching from the first to the second Adam. Our philosophy, if we have any, is in this matter the handmaid of our faith. On *a priori* grounds, we should not expect to find the Christian revelation, so vast, so full, so clear, occupying an isolated place, midway in the records of the past ; but should look for some pre-announcement of the Anointed of God and the Regenerator of man, — some fore-shining of the true and universal light. We should expect to see somewhere in the past the rude germ of a religious system so comprehensive and perfect, and to trace its gradual unfolding, its budding promise, from age to age. Had we not the Old Testament extant, we should cherish no doubt that there had been one, if not written with a human pen, yet engraven by miracle on the phenomena of nature, and by the divine spirit on the fleshly tablets of the heart. Yet, with this belief, so far are we from adducing the Old Testament to substantiate the New, that we reason back from the New to the Old, in order to

authenticate the latter on what seems to us the surest ground. The prophetic argument for the truth of Christianity we deem complete and sound ; but it is better adapted to confirm than to create faith. It is not of a nature to be appreciated by ignorant or stubborn unbelief. The proofs of the antiquity, genuineness, and authenticity of the books of Old Testament, real and convincing as they are, are too archaic and recondite in their character, to be set forth with good effect in popular lectures or treatises ; and yet the unbeliever justly demands these proofs, when arguments are drawn from the Old Testament in behalf of the religion of the New. If you allege a particular prediction as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, it is not enough for you to demonstrate its application to him, and to him alone. You must also convince the skeptic, perhaps a man unversed in the laws of historical evidence, (which is a very different thing from convincing yourself,) that the words which you cite were written before the advent of Jesus.

Then, again, the internal objections and difficulties connected with the Old Testament are much more numerous and grave than those connected with the New. That this is the case, if not a *primâ facie* argument in favor of the Old Testament, is, at least, a fact, the absence of which would indicate a supposititious system, of modern creation, sustained by forged records. Were the steps to the authentication of the Old Testament obvious and easy, it could not be what it purports to be, namely, the record of an abrogated system, temporary and local in its character, based upon the exigencies of an age, of which it is the only surviving monument. Christianity and its records, on the other hand, purport to have had their birth in a well known age, on which the most enduring monuments of ancient literature and art reflect a flood of light, and among a people, whose national traits have been stereotyped for two thousand years, and whose condition then, and their fortunes ever since, are the subject of authentic history. Then, too, if Christianity be of divine origin, it was undoubtedly designed to be perpetual and universal ; and we should therefore expect to find, that its divine Author had suffered to be connected with its records fewer things that could become obsolete, or unintelligible, or distasteful, than we might find in the records of a system equally divine, which the world was destined to outgrow.

Moreover, Christianity is complete and sufficient in itself without Judaism and its records. A man need not be made a Jew, in order to become a Christian. One might have the firmest possible faith in the divine origin of Christianity, and yet might deny the credibility of many parts of the Old Testament, and have little or no faith in the inspiration of Moses. The early Gentile converts, nay, many of the Fathers, knew little and thought little of the Old Testament ; and the just estimation in which the Christian world now holds it, as the authentic record of God's earlier revelations, it attained only by slow degrees, and not in the whole church until the fourth or fifth century. Why, then, should the inquirer into the truth of Christianity be perplexed, against his will, by the entire argument in behalf of Judaism ? Or, why should objections to the earlier dispensation be suffered to hang about the later and clearer ? Far better is the course taken in the work before us. Let Christianity be set forth as based on the immutable grounds of historical testimony and undoubted miracle, and as authenticated by internal marks of divinity, which no imposture could counterfeit, and which no well disposed mind can mistake. There let the inquirer pause, if he will. Thus far, let all doubts be put at rest, as they easily may be. Then let Judaism, with its records, constitute a distinct and independent branch of inquiry ; for it opens not only a wider field, but a different mode of research, demands a different apparatus for investigation, and claims, if proved authentic, a different kind of reverence. A different *kind*, we say, not degree ; for whatever is divine must needs be perfect in its place and for its uses, and therefore demands the highest *degree* of reverence ; but we revere Judaism and its records with a simply objective regard, as the light of another world than ours ; while Christianity is the central orb of our own system, the sun of our own souls.

The first course of Dr. Palfrey's Lectures occupies in the main the ground marked out by Paley, and retraced in part by most of the professed treatises on the Christian evidences. But the field, though covered by a host of writers, was by no means exhausted ; and these lectures constitute an original work, so far as in the nature of things originality can be affirmed of such a work. The arrangement is both comprehensive and compact. The leading heads of argument

are exhibited in the relative order in which they would naturally present themselves to a seeker after truth, and are made to bear upon each other with a constantly accumulating power. The first lecture, on the respective provinces and mutual relations of the *internal* and the *external* evidences of Christianity, is a treatise of very great value, and admirably adapted to rebuke the sneering tone which some assume, and to shape the vague ideas which many entertain, with regard to the validity of historical testimony in matters of faith. It is, in truth, intrinsically necessary, that religion should have a historical basis. We have no conclusive internal evidence of any thing out of the range of our own consciousness. The utmost that internal marks of credibility can do, out of the province of consciousness, is, to render a proposition probable by showing its consistency with previously ascertained truth, and thus to prepare the way for the presentation of historical evidence, or to confirm it when presented. But the truths of religion are, most of them, out of the range of consciousness. We can be conscious only of what appertains to ourselves and to the present moment, while religious truth embraces all orders of beings and a past and future eternity. Concerning these beings and this eternity, we may, indeed, form plausible conjectures ; we may test such views as are proposed by our own notions of fitness and rectitude, and may feel ourselves strongly drawn towards certain opinions and repelled from others by their accordance or discrepancy with our own sentiments or characters. But this accordance is not demonstration, nor is this discrepancy disproof ; for how know we, that we ourselves may not have fallen out of the harmony of the spiritual universe, so that, in fact, that which is the most widely at variance with our tone of feeling may be the truth ? Is it said, that harmony with our *intuitions* is the unfailing criterion of truth ? We reply, that it is impossible to distinguish our intuitions from the early and established results of education, reasoning, or prejudice. That this is the case is evident from the discrepancy between the alleged intuitions of persons differing as to nation, culture, or religion.

But we are told, that truth, being absolute and universal, cannot be safely received on human testimony, but only on that of the Absolute Being himself, with whose nature and attributes all truth is identical. This we grant. But men

are adequate witnesses to individual and local facts ; and such facts, when they stand apart from the common course of nature, and transcend the established sphere of human agency, must needs be the expressions, signs, or indications of absolute truth. Herein lies the efficacy of miracles as a form of testimony. We do not contend that Matthew, or John, or Paul is a competent witness to absolute truth. But miracles, if they have occurred, are individual and local facts, and, as such, may be substantiated, like any other facts, by human testimony. They are facts, which, from their very definition, must have taken place aside from the usual course of events and beyond the power of man. They are, therefore, the voice, the testimony, of God ; and whatever truth they imply, and whatever truth they attest, by taking place in immediate connexion with its promulgation, rests on the authority of God. We do not, then, when we urge the external evidences of Christianity, present the Apostles and Evangelists as witnesses to the truths which constitute the Christian religion ; — to these truths God is our only witness ; — those great and holy men simply substantiate the miraculous facts, which are God's testimony.

Having shown the necessity and value of external testimony, and assigned to internal evidence its deservedly high, and yet subordinate, rank in the scale of Christian evidences, Dr. Palfrey proceeds to prove the *a priori* credibility of miracles, and the necessity and seasonableness of the Christian revelation. Under this last head, he has given us the most graphic and truthful picture that we remember to have seen of the intellectual and moral condition of mankind at the time of the Saviour's advent, enriched by numerous and peculiarly apt classical references and quotations. He then proves the authenticity of the four Gospels ; clears the Evangelists from the charges of imposture and enthusiasm ; establishes their trustworthiness as witnesses to the facts which they relate ; and exhibits the early and ample reception of their narratives, under circumstances of time, place, and antagonist belief and interest, which must have subjected their testimony to the most searching and skeptical scrutiny, as a phenomenon to be accounted for only by supposing them true and faithful witnesses.

The argument comprised in these eight lectures is close, logical, continuous. We miss no essential link. We de-

tect no irrelevant matter. The whole could be reduced to a few simple syllogisms. There is no compend of the Christian evidences, which we should put so hopefully as we should this, into the hands of a candid and philosophical unbeliever ; and, could this course be published apart from the other two, somewhat simplified in style, and recast from the form of lectures into that of a compact treatise, with appropriate divisions and titles, it would become at once a highly popular work, — a text-book for schools and colleges, — a book for the many, which the many would read, and prize, and enjoy.

But admirably as the plan of the first of these courses is filled out, and its designs accomplished, the work, as it now is, will be chiefly sought for and valued on account of the second and third courses. The complete history of infidelity was, so far as we know, never written before. The materials here brought together were previously accessible only through the medium of a larger library than falls to the lot of many private individuals. The monuments of pagan hostility to our religion, few indeed and fragmentary, are widely scattered. The only avowed compend of Jewish anti-Christian writings, which we have ever seen, is Wagenseil's "Tela Ignea Satanæ," which contains barely a few Rabbinical tracts, with a Latin version, and a verbose, pedantic, and almost interminable commentary. The period covered by Leland's "View of English Deistical Writers" includes most (though not all) of the distinguished names that have been arrayed in England against the Christian faith ; but this, though almost supplying the place of the writers themselves for all purposes of reference, is not a book to be read so much as to be consulted. The sneers and the sophisms of French unbelief are, indeed, hardly worth collecting, with a view to rebut or expose them, from those foulest of literary *cloacæ*, where they are fast rotting in oblivion ; but still the reign of irreligion in France covers so large a space on the map of the yet recent past, as to excite a reasonable curiosity respecting its sources and its agents. German infidelity, mystified, sublimated, and unlabelled, must, to be sure, be encountered by all, who, in the departments of philosophy, biblical criticism, and theology, would avail themselves of German learning ; but its Heaven-daring audacity and its pompous shallowness can be fully exposed only by the attempt to clothe its in-

flated, featureless, limbless form in plain Anglo-Saxon garments. By bringing together all these phases of unbelief in a succinct form, and giving us a comprehensive view of its history from the earliest times, Dr. Palfrey has rendered an eminent service to the cause of religion.

But what can the history of infidelity do for the cause of religion? Much, every way, we reply. Christianity is proved, not by demonstrative, but by moral reasoning. Now demonstration is the only one-sided argument. In all departments of moral reasoning, there are two sides to every question,—there are arguments for, and objections against, every proposition. Our conviction is determined by the preponderance of arguments over objections, or of objections over arguments; and the strength of our conviction depends on the degree of this preponderance. We receive with confidence a proposition, for which we find but few and slender positive arguments, if there be hardly a shadow of objection to it; for this very lack of objections is itself an argument. On the other hand, we receive with great doubt, or utterly reject, a proposition sustained by a great weight of positive argument, if the objections to it are numerous and difficult to be answered. With regard to Christianity, the positive argument in favor of its divine origin approaches as near to demonstration as moral reasoning can; but the actual weight and worth of this argument depend upon the strength or weakness of the counter-argument. If infidelity can indeed make out a strong case, then does the array of argument on the Christian side, overpowering as it seems at first sight, furnish no adequate basis for belief. But if infidelity is shallow and sophistical, if it perpetually repeats itself, if it has conceded separately every point that the Christian claims, then do its weakness and inconsistency add much weight to the positive argument for Christianity. A synoptical view of the history of unbelief is, therefore, essential to the fair, and, we add with gratitude, to the full exhibition of the Christian evidences. Infidelity gains nothing by the mustering of its forces. Bring them together, and they destroy each other.

Before we had read these Lectures of Dr. Palfrey, a friend, who is not much of a reasoner, told us that this work was greatly disfigured by constant references to former lectures, in such forms as the following: “This question I treated at large in a former lecture,”—“These objections

had before been urged by Tindal, and have already received our attention," — "This writer revived and amplified an objection, which I formerly mentioned as having been urged by some of the ancient opponents of the faith." It is a fact, that such forms of speech are very frequent, and that they thicken fast as the work draws to a close. But they occur by no fault of the author. On the other hand, they constitute to a reflecting believer one of the most pleasant features of the work ; for they reveal the narrow compass, and the incessant repetition from age to age, of infidel arguments and objections. Indeed, the canon of infidelity was long since closed. Not a single new argument against Christianity has been brought forward for the last two hundred years ; and very few new things have been said or written on that side since the days of the Emperor Julian. The French Encyclopædists originated nothing but ribaldry and buffoonery. Rationalistic Germany has done little more than to caricature the Gospels, by employing Hume's heartless, ungodly skepticism in their pseudo-interpretation. Paine simply copied from Voltaire gibes and scoffs, which Voltaire had raked together from ancient kennels both Jewish and Gentile. It is amazing, that, while so many ingenious minds have been employed against Christianity, they should have collected so scanty materials. The testimony against the gospel has been very much like that against its Author and Finisher, when "they sought many witnesses, but found none, till at last they found two witnesses, yet neither did their testimony agree." Indeed, a large part of the literature of infidelity is made up of individual idiosyncrasies,—of objections which grew out of some peculiar bias of the author's own mind, and could have no weight with any other mind. Unbelief has run in an exceedingly narrow cycle, and has been constantly returning upon itself. New books, in its refutation, have for many years been needless. The new infidel publications, that appear from time to time, only need, for their refutation, that we refer to the right page and chapter of works often as old as those of Justin and Origen.

On the other hand, the evidences of Christianity have been accumulating from age to age. Every department of science, every art, every new chapter of human experience, brings its separate contribution of argument or illustration. Geography, philosophy, natural history, psychology, have

all poured rich and still increasing light upon the Scriptures and their contents. Science has, in numerous instances, attained, in confirmation of revealed religion and its records, results, at which it cavilled in the outset. There are rich and productive veins of Christian evidence, which have just begun to be worked. The argument from the results of Christianity, from its influence on science, art, literature, and human happiness, it would take scores of volumes to write, and, in the rapid vicissitudes, and the unprecedented progress of society, no year now passes without presenting this argument in new aspects. But it has as yet received no systematic treatment, and lies a field fully white for the harvest, to reward the labors of the friends of truth. Judging from the past and the present, we may safely say, that the evidences of Christianity will be continually presented from new points of view, and with an exhaustless affluence of argument and illustration, till the arrival of that yet distant day, when universal faith will make formal proof superfluous.

The concessions of infidels, we next remark, give the Christian all that he claims. We question not that an edifying and useful treatise on the evidences of Christianity might be constructed by putting together those passages of infidel writers, in which they defend some portions of the system, while attacking others, and in which they contend for the validity of some modes of proof, while seeking to invalidate others. We know not any author who has written against Christianity, who has not granted some cardinal point in its favor, either as regards the genuineness of its records, the purity of its morals, the dignity of its Founder's character, or the credibility of some of its doctrines.

This consideration derives additional weight from the fact, that infidels, in general, have made their concessions with regard to those parts of Christianity or its evidences, to which they were respectively the most competent witnesses. Thus the early opposers of Christianity, both Jewish and Gentile, occupied a position eminently favorable to the exposure of error in the alleged facts of the gospel, or of forgery as to its records; and they unanimously admitted the genuineness of those records, and the authenticity of the evangelical narrative as a whole. All the early unbelievers referred to the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists, and cited them by name, just as we Christians do now; and they

have quoted passages various enough and long enough to establish beyond dispute the identity of the books in their hands with our present canonical books. We might extract, from what remains to us of the writings of the unbeliever Celsus alone, a pretty satisfactory compend of gospel history.* Most of these early unbelievers also admitted our Saviour's miracles as unquestionable facts. This, it will be remembered, was the case with our Saviour's most vehement personal enemies among the Jews of his own day. They did not deny that he cast out demons, but reproached him for casting them out through the aid of Beelzebub.† The same ground was generally taken by the pagan adversaries of Christianity. They admitted the preternatural character of Christ's works ; but maintained that he wrought them through magic arts acquired in Egypt. The Jews also, even down to the thirteenth century or later, while, of course, they denied the divine mission of Christ, universally admitted him to have been a great wonder-worker, but ascribed his miracles to magic. This is the story of the Talmuds, and we find it repeated in the Rabbinical writings, from century to century, under two different versions, — the one, that he learned magic in Egypt, the other, that he stole the ineffable name of God from the corner-stone of the temple, and by means of it wrought divine works. Now, what more could the early adversaries of our religion have done for its defence, than to have left on record their clear, full admission of the leading supernatural facts in our Saviour's life ? These facts it behooved them to deny, if they could, and to cast whatever discredit they could upon the books containing them. But they lived too near the times. They could not deny facts, which had engraven themselves so deeply upon the general mind. They could not gainsay records, the marks of whose genuineness were known and read of all men. They resorted, therefore, to that puerile hypothesis of magic, which in those superstitious

* Our theological readers will remember, that Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian are among the foremost witnesses cited in favor of Christianity and its records, in Lardner's "Credibility."

† This statement, indeed, rests, for its authority, on the records whose genuineness is the point in discussion ; but the Evangelists must certainly be allowed, on all hands, to be valid witnesses to reproaches and calumnies, which they quote with manifest mortification, and which, at an age when such charges could find easy credence, they had every worldly motive to suppress.

ages could find some credence, but which, in our days, only reveals the utter hollowness and absurdity of their unbelief.

Is it asked, What, then, were the chief objections of those early adversaries of Christianity? Many of them were based on the assumed truth of then existing religions, and, of course, have no weight now; for with modern skepticism, the question is not between Christianity and some other religion, but between Christianity and no religion. But many of the objections of early unbelievers were based on essential and immutable features of our religion, and on features, which now, so far from demanding apology, contribute the most largely to its defence and its honor. Things, which were "to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness," are now on all hands acknowledged to be full of divine wisdom and beauty. Thus Celsus dwells much on the lowliness of our Saviour's birth, and on the circumstance, that the gospel addresses itself to the poor and humble, — facts, which have so entirely revolutionized the opinions of all Christendom with regard to the accident of birth or outward rank, that no modern infidel would dare to cite them in disparagement of Christianity. The cross was perpetually cast in the teeth of the early Christians; but what Christian now would think of defending the cross, or of making an apology for the prayer, "*Fac me cruce custodiri*"? That, whereon the Man of Sorrows was hung in ignominy, from having been a grievous burden and reproach for ages to his church, has now become the proudest and most cherished of symbols, — sparkles in the diadem of royalty and on the brow of beauty, and claims homage a hundred-fold for the old world's contempt and scorn. And, in this marvellous transfiguration, the cross is a type of numerous features of its own religion, which, in the early ages of the church, were shot at from every quiver, but which are now placed for ever beyond attack and above defence.

In modern times, unbelief has taken a different route. It has confined its objections, for the most part, to the records and the facts connected with Christianity, the evidences of which are buried in remote antiquity; while it has made the largest and most valuable concessions with regard to the practical working of the Christian system, its beneficial tendencies and results, its elevating and reforming influence upon society, — points, of which the early unbelievers were

incompetent judges, but which sixteen or seventeen centuries of successful experiment have enabled modern infidels to decide satisfactorily. We know not where to look for more eloquent and discriminating testimony to the intrinsic worth and power of our religion, than we might quote from the writings of English and French infidels of the last two centuries. Rousseau, whose name, to almost every ear, is identified with infidelity, in some of his works professes the most enthusiastic veneration for the sacred writings, dilates upon the sanctity of the gospel code of morals, protests against the comparison of the writings of the ancient philosophers with the books of the New Testament, and with passionate eloquence exalts the character of Christ above every other ideal of excellence that man has ever beheld or imagined. He maintained, that the institutions of Christianity ought to be supported at public expense, as the bulwarks of society, and the sources of the most beneficent influence to all classes and conditions of men. The same sentiments, which Rousseau dressed up in the most glowing, moving rhetoric, we find set forth at great length, and with much explicitness of statement, by Woolston, Morgan, and other English infidels, — men who, with consummate inconsistency, first demonstrate, with great show of sincerity, that Christianity is useful and good, pure and true, in its doctrines and its precepts, and then attempt to persuade their readers that it is not a gift of God, and ought by all means to be despised and rejected.

Such are the concessions of infidels in favor of Christianity. “Their rock is not as our rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.” The temple of our faith stands entire in strength and beauty, as those enemies testify, each with regard to the portion to which he is a competent witness. Those, who lived near the time when the cornerstone was laid, bear testimony to its depth and firmness ; those, who have beheld the finished building (while they question the sufficiency of the foundation, which they must dig deep to see), own its proportions fair, its walls complete in grace and majesty, its altars chaste and venerable, its sanctuary pure and holy. Our adversaries, taken together, make good our cause. They furnish Christianity with a sufficient defence. We need only collect and arrange their admissions, — nothing of our own is wanted to complete the pile of evidence.

We close our notice of Dr. Palfrey's work, (a notice more brief and cursory than it claims and deserves,) with our sincere thanks for a compend so able, thorough, and scholarly, and with the earnest hope, that other engagements may not permanently alienate him from those departments of Biblical and theological learning, which his accurate habits of thought and a life of diligent and profound study have so admirably qualified him to enrich and adorn.

ART. III. — *Ueber die Moeglichkeit eines zwischen dem deutschen Zoll-Verein und den Vereinigten Staaten von America abzuschliessenden Handels und Schiffahrts-Vertrags.* (On the Possibility of a direct Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between the States of the German Tariff-League and the United States of America. "The German Quarterly," of January 1st, 1843.)

THE German Quarterly (*Die Deutsche Vierteljahrs-schrift*) of the 1st of January, 1843, contains an elaborate article in support of certain opinions that coincide in a singular manner with the views expressed by Mr. Webster, at Baltimore, respecting reciprocity treaties, and combating with much energy the particular treaty of commerce and navigation, which now exists between the Hanseatic towns, Hamburg, Bremen, and Lubeck, on the one part, and the United States on the other. This reciprocity treaty, the writer declares, has proved entirely illusory in respect to the benefits expected from it for both countries. Germany, he says, secures to her large manufacturing population in Saxony and Westphalia no advantage that is not, by the mere operation of the tariff laws of the United States, equally shared by Great Britain and France; while the United States, by securing the market of the Hanse Towns for their great staples, have not yet gained a *débouché* in Germany. The United States have, by treaty, put the ships of Bremen, Hamburg, and Lubeck on the same footing as their own; but in return, they are not permitted to send their cotton, tobacco, and rice to the States of the German League, except on such terms as the latter may think prop-